

THE BOOKS

America—Inspected But Not Passed

Truly the best test of a writer's mental calibre is to set him doing travel sketches. Turn a man loose on some other country and the way in which he interprets the things he reports and fails to report, place the man pretty accurately as a thinking artist or a dilettante.

When Arnold Bennett saw America from Pullman he produced a series of brilliant sketches of buildings and suburbs and clubs, but not the least reflection, incidentally, of the sort of race that lived in them.

Mr. Dickinson has taken the spiritual gauge of the four countries and the reflection of this in art. The average American is not expected to enjoy the world, to interpret them, to be a man of letters.

contemptuous of ideas, but amorous of devices, valuing nothing but success, recognizing nothing but the actual. Man in the concrete, undisturbed spiritual life, the master of methods and the slave of things, and therefore the conqueror of the world, the unquestioning, the undoubting, the child with the muscles of a man, the European strip bare and show for what he is, a necessary, unreflective, naive, preciously accomplished brute.

It is the infirmity of human nature never to recognize its portrait. And there are manifest exaggerations in Mr. Dickinson's spiritual estimate, just as there is truth in the following estimate of facts:

In no civilization except Japan is there so much developed as in the States; in none is capital so uncontrolled, in none is justice so openly prostituted to wealth.

But it is to be said in extenuation—in need, the author remarks in his preface—that he wrote these letters in 1909, when "social justice" had not yet invaded political verbiage. Mr. Dickinson is the first to admit that it may be a future for the art and spirit of America when we have solved the economic and social problems with which we labor.

A Mystic Novel of Reality

The land of dream fancies seems a strange setting for a modern novel. But John Stevens in his "Sleeping Waters" (Mitchell Kennerly, N. Y.) sends his hero to such a land where there is a stream of forgetfulness which cures all ills. John Anger, a parish priest in the slums of London, is a man who seeks new health among the bracken and moors and to find the sleeping waters. The story tells us of his strange adventures in a world of mist and moonlight, where the love of woman and finally of his return to real life in which the dreams he has been living reveal themselves. His adventures are full of mystery and romance, the spirit of the moor, is but a dream; and that a murder which he committed under the influence of the girl but a flight of fancy.

Wedekind in English

America is slowly making the acquaintance of that unique German dramatist, Frank Wedekind. The latest play to be translated, "The Earthquake" (Athens and Charles Boni, N. Y.), will probably have interest in the man, though hardly satisfy it.

The translation by Samuel A. Elliot, Jr., is both excellent and unsatisfactory. Being the work of a playwright, its speeches have movement; being the work of a scholar also, it is weighted down with such cringing pedantry as translating the word "dech" as "just."

A Curious Peace Plan

Every little author has a peace plan of his own these days. James Howard Kehler's is unique. Mitchell Kennerly has made a brief little volume of it by repeating the editorial comment of the forum which accompanied "An Open Letter to the Nation With Regard to a Peace Plan," when it appeared in that publication.

Mr. Kehler's proposition is admittedly "nonpolitical and nonconventional," for it is entirely a matter of psychology. It proposes to change the name of the War Department to the Peace Department, and generally to substitute the word "peace" for every mention of "war" in public documents or utterances.

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Bary Pain at His Best

"Stories in Grey," a collection of short fables and sketches by Barry Pain (F. A. Stokes, New York), has a distinctly twilight atmosphere with only occasional gleams of sun and color to pierce the monotony and give the book contrast. The stories present an array of interesting types, people you know, in all kinds of situations, some of them weird and horrible, others merely commonplace.

The author shows interesting generalities of life and character through an irresponsible, unscrupulous hypnotist, several spectacled maiden ladies, a struggling, ineffectual journalist, even an ignorant, placid housewife, and seems to create the life far-fetched effect, by causing a neat, timid old lady to leave her neat little home one morning with the charitable intent of relieving her supplicants by feeding them deadly poison.

The co-operation of many of the leading representatives of Philadelphia's manufacturing interests has been pledged, and within a few weeks plans will be completed for giving this city world-wide fame for goods known the world over, but not generally known as Philadelphia goods.

Fighting in Flanders

The dykes have been cut and the flood of war literature is rolling in on American readers. The prospect would not be particularly disquieting if all the correspondents who have been in the field and are now engaged in reviewing and revamping their campaign experiences could be expected to write their stories with the same simple directness and force that E. Alexander Powell employs in his book, "Fighting in Flanders" (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons). Mr. Powell, who went to Belgium soon after the outbreak of the war, makes no pretension to writing a war history, but contents himself with a narrative of his own experiences up to the time of the fall of Antwerp.

Every collector would do well not to read Mr. Armstrong's book, but would be vastly benefited by having a volume at hand for reference. This book ranks with Scott's annual catalogue as a valuable asset to the collector.

The Modern Crochet Book

If there is a fondness for lace work in dress trimmings, underwear and household linens, "The Modern Crochet Book" (Stokes, New York) will be a temptation to those ignorant in the technique of crocheting. For the experienced crocheter it will be useful, to say the least. For the little book pictures the most interesting and novel patterns in all forms of crocheting, and also gives the names and explanations of how to produce the realities. As with most technical books, a layman will find it somewhat unintelligible.

Barrie Out of His Depth

England has few more sensitive artists than J. M. Barrie; none with such feeling for the sentimental values of life. Therefore, it was hardly a surprise to readers when he turned out so obviously and commonplace a playlet as "Der Tag" (Scottish Book Co., N. Y.). It tells a story of a man who is a failure in life, but who finds a play-act and dialogue—"Der Tag" is a hopeless case of overreaching. The plot has no perceptible dramatic movement. For the experienced crocheter to discover how the destruction of Louvain can take place between the peace of the beginning of the play and the appearance of accusing "culture" at the end, the language is stiff and unpassioned, labored when it should burn with passion. It might be written in contemporary blank verse.

Proving the Prophets

In a clean-cut discourse "The Prophet and His Problems" (Scribner's, N. Y.), tears the veil of mystery from the ancient prophet and examines his literature as the writings of a human being—a man among men. J. M. Rowis Smith explains the points of similarity and difference in the prophetic products of the ancient lands. It is shown that prophecy was not restricted to Israel, but that in Babylonia, Assyria, Phoenicia, Syria and Egypt systems of prophetic necromancy, sorcery and magic existed before the Hebrew prophet attained the heights which he reached as the champion of the poor, the judge of his generation and the messenger of God. The relations between the prophet and the State and the individual are admirably traced.

The New Books

A list of books received for review, more extensive comment will be made on those whose importance warrants further attention.

CITY'S FAME WILL BE SPREAD AS PRODUCER OF 'WORLD-SELLERS'

Leading Business Men Will Advertise Philadelphia by Advertising Principal Articles Made Here.

A movement to advertise this city as the pre-eminent producer of "world-sellers" in America is sponsored by the leading local business and trade bodies. The slogan of the campaign will be "Philadelphia, the leading American producer of world-sellers," and the keynote of the movement will be to advertise Philadelphia by advertising the principal articles made here.

For Stamp Collectors

Douglas B. Armstrong's comprehensive philatelic work, entitled "The Boy's Book of Stamp Collecting" (Grant Richards, Ltd., London), is a treatise which far oversteers the bounds of its title. The book is obviously written by an expert. It says to be a book for the use of the boy who is beginning his stamp-collecting career, yet in it may be found data pertaining to stamps and the art of collecting which will be indispensable to the man who has made a study of stamp collecting for years.

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GERMAN TANKER EMS TO HOIST AMERICAN FLAG

Plans Afoot for Transfer of Other Ships to U. S. Registry.

Following the lead set by the placing of the Hamburg-American steamship Decla under the American flag, plans are being formulated at this port for the transfer of the German tank steamship Ems to American registry. There is a well defined rumor in maritime circles that options have been obtained on the Hamburg-American Line steamships Prinz Oskar and Rheatta, interned here.

THANKS FROM TAYLOR

Transit Director Sends Message to People of City.

A message of thanks has been issued by Transit Director Taylor to the people for their loyal support at the Academy of Music of the transit program.

THIEVES STEAL SILVERWARE

Thieves entered the home of Joseph Ashbrook, 254 Baring street, today, carried all of the silverware out into the garage, took some of the smaller articles and fled.

OBITUARIES

Rowland Evans, for years a member of the Philadelphia Bar, who before his retirement 10 years ago, figured in many notable cases as counsel, died last night at his home in Ardmore, aged 66.

CONTRACT FOR FREIGHTERS

Two of the largest freight steamships ever constructed will be built on the Delaware River, according to the announcement today that the New York Shipbuilding Company had been awarded a contract for the Coastwise Transportation Company, of Boston, for the building of two such vessels to cost \$1,000,000.

WARN STEAMSHIP COMPANIES

Falsifying of Manifests Will Be Subject for Prosecution.

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CENTRAL NATIONAL BANK OF PHILADELPHIA

At the regular Annual Meeting of Stockholders of this Bank, held January 15th, 1915, the following gentlemen were elected Directors for the ensuing year.

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DEATHS

McCartney, suddenly, January 15, 1915, at his home, 1212 South 22d St., Philadelphia, Pa. Cause of death, heart failure.

Deaths

ANDERSON—On January 15, 1915, JOHN ANDERSON, aged 74 years, died at his residence, 1747 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. Cause of death, heart failure.

Deaths

BOYCE—On January 15, 1915, DENNIS J. BOYCE, aged 68 years, died at his residence, 1234 North 22d St., Philadelphia, Pa. Cause of death, heart failure.

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DOBEL—On January 14, 1915, KATE DOBEL, aged 72 years, died at her residence, 1234 North 22d St., Philadelphia, Pa. Cause of death, heart failure.

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